

NARRATIVE
OF THE
SHIPWRECK OF THE JUNO,
ON
THE COAST OF ARACAN,

AND
*Of the singular Preservation of Fourteen of her Company on
the Wreck, without Food,*

DURING A PERIOD OF TWENTY-THREE DAYS:

IN A LETTER TO HIS FATHER,
THE REV. THOMAS MACKAY,
MINISTER OF LAIRC, SUTHERLANDSHIRE,

BY
WILLIAM MACKAY,
LATE SECOND OFFICER OF THE SHIP.

London:

**PRINTED FOR J. DEBRET, PICCADILLY; G. NICOLL, BOOKSELLER
TO HIS MAJESTY, PALL MALL; EGERTON, WHITEHALL;
AND SEWELL, CORNHILL: SOLD ALSO BY
MANNERS AND MILLER, EDINBURGH.**

1798.



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P R E F A C E.

THE following Narrative was originally written to gratify the curiosity of an aged parent; if curiosity be not an inadequate and improper term to express the strong interest which a father must feel in the dangers and misfortunes of a son. It has been read in manuscript by a considerable number of intelligent persons, who are of opinion that it ought not to be withheld from the Public.

Narratives of this sort are generally interesting, from the uncommon and extra-

ordinary scenes which they exhibit. They may often be useful to sufferers in similar circumstances, by teaching them the means of palliating distress, of averting danger, and of prolonging life. They cannot be entirely unprofitable to any one, who acquires from the perusal of such a singular detail of facts, what they are so well calculated to impress on the human mind, a lesson of patience under calamities, apparently the most intolerable, and of hope and courage in situations which seem the most desperate; and who is thereby taught that cheerful submission to the unfearchable decrees of Providence, and that unshaken confidence in the goodness of the Supreme Disposer of the World, which are the best auxiliaries of human frailty, and the only inexhaustible

haughty source of a constant and exalted fortitude.

Extraordinary as the circumstances may appear which are related in the following pages, it will be impossible for the most sceptical reader to doubt the truth of any of them. They are attested, as will be found in the sequel, by the oath of three of the sufferers, and some of the most material facts are of such a nature, that they must have been known to many others. The original affidavit, to the truth of the whole, constitutes part of the public record of the East-India Company's settlement at Chit-tagong; and the original letters are in the hands of Mr. W. Mackay's family. The Editor is convinced that all readers of taste will

will approve the caution with which he has revised the manuscript. He is satisfied, that even at the hazard of suffering some inaccuracies to remain, the peculiarities with which the language of the writer is tinged by his profession and situation ought to be preserved, that it may be an exact image of his mind, and even of his feelings, at the time, and that the slightest suspicion may not be entertained of any addition or misrepresentation of fact.

That this Publication did not appear much earlier, is to be imputed to the constant professional engagements of Mr. Mackay, since his shipwreck. On his arrival at Calcutta in December, 1795, being a young man, and perfectly recovered from all
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the effects of that disaster, he was appointed to one of the Company's country ships, which was dispatched for Europe, and arrived in August, 1796. No sooner had she discharged her cargo, than she was ordered out to the West-Indies with troops, and did not return till August, 1797. In the month of November following, Mr. Mackay sailed again for India. The letters were accordingly written during the short intervals of duty, in circumstances by no means favourable to distinct recollection, and an accurately detailed narration.

The Editor not having the advantage of Mr. Mackay's own assistance, hopes that, if in the few corrections which he has hazarded, he should any where have mis-stated matters

matters relating to navigation, he may expect the indulgence of nautical readers; and he hopes for the same candour in matters relating to the customs and usages of the East, from those who are best acquainted with that subject.

NARRATIVE,

NARRATIVE,

&c. &c.

Portsmouth, Nov. 1, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

IN obedience to your repeated commands, I shall endeavour, before my final departure for India, to give you a full account of the loss of the *Juno*, with the subsequent trials, and providential escape, of a small part of her crew. The duties of my profession have so occupied my time, as to leave me no leisure for executing the task sooner; and when I have attempted it, I generally found myself so much agitated by the painful recollection, that I have been unable to proceed. Time, however, has so blunted the edge of my feelings, that I can now turn my thoughts to the subject with more composure, and though the picture may be less lively than it would probably have been, if earlier drawn, it will, I trust, still convey an interesting, as well as faithful representation, of the scene.

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I am aware of my own inability to write for the public eye, but if (as some have suggested) the following narrative should be thought worthy of publication, I have no objection to your giving it to the World, in any form you judge proper.

I have already drawn up a hasty sketch of the principal facts and circumstances, to which, jointly with two of my fellow-sufferers, I made affidavit, as will appear in the sequel; and as what I now offer you is only a more detailed Narrative of the substance of that affidavit, I wish it to be considered as given under the sanction of the same solemn obligation.

For reasons with which you are already acquainted, I quitted, at Rangoon, the capital of Pegu *, the vessel to which I formerly belonged, and

* Pegu is a kingdom of the farther India, situated on the east side of the Bay of Bengal, between the 15th and 24th degrees of north latitude. It is bounded on the west and south-west by the sea; on the south-east, by the kingdom of Siam; on the north, by that range of mountains which bounds the Empire of China to the south-west; and on the north-west, by the kingdom of Ava. Its extreme length is, from south by west to north by east, about six hundred miles; and its greatest breadth, about three hundred and fifty miles.

This country was once subject to an independent Prince; but about sixty years ago a revolution took place, by which it became

and accepted the situation of second mate of the Juno, Captain Alexander Bremner, then lying at that place, and taking in a cargo of teak-wood * for

came a province of the kingdom of Ava. The old metropolis took its name from a branch of the Syrian river, on which it was situated; but the seat of Government has since been transferred to Rangoon, on another branch of the same river, about 16°. 30'. North latitude, 96°. 30'. East longitude. This capital consists of two parts, the one of which is enclosed by a high stoccade, and furnished with gates; but without a wall, or any place where guns can be mounted, and this is called the fort. The other part extends a considerable way down the river, and is entirely open. The houses are all constructed of wood, and raised on pretty high pillars, which is a necessary precaution, as the flowing of the tide lays most of the town under water. The streets are not paved; and are only passable by means of a plank, which is laid along from one end to the other, so that when two persons meet, one of them is often obliged to step into the mire. The whole country is low, and the land can only be seen at a very short distance from sea. The water is shallow many leagues off the coast, so that ships get into three or four fathoms water before they come within sight of land. At the new and full moon, the tides near the bar rise about twenty feet perpendicular, and their flow is amazingly rapid. The exports from this kingdom are teak-wood, tin, bees-wax, gold, nitre, areca, cachow petroleum, grain, animals, fruit, &c. See *Concise Account of the Kingdom of Pegu*, by W. Hunter, A. M. Surgeon in the Honourable East-India Company's Service.

* This most useful tree is, according to Dr. Roxburgh, a native of various parts of India, viz: of the mountainous parts of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, of the mountains bordering on the banks of the Godavery, above Rajahmundry, Pegu, &c. Lord Cornwallis and Col. Kyd have begun, some time ago, to

for Madras. The Juno was a ship of 450 tons burthen, very much out of repair, and in all respects

introduce it into Bengal, where it thrives well. On the Coromandel Coast it flowers in the hot season; seed ripe in August and September.

The wood of this tree, the only useful part of it, from long experience has been found to be by far the most useful timber in Asia; it is light, easily worked, and at the same time both strong and durable: that which grows near the banks of the Godavery is beautifully veined, considerably closer in the grain and heavier than any other I have seen; it is therefore particularly fit for furniture, gun carriages, &c. when small timber is wanted. For ship building the teak is reckoned superior to any other sort of wood, being light, strong and very durable, either in or out of the water.—*Plants of the Coast of Coromandel; published by Order of the East India Company. 1795. Page 14.*

The principal object of Europeans who frequent this port, (Rangoon) is the trade of Teak wood, which is produced in greater plenty in Pegu, than in any other part of India. This is a tree which grows to a very considerable size; and in its texture, except that it is more flexible and not quite so hard, resembles the Oak. It is of the most universal use all over India, not only in making of furniture, but more especially, in the construction of ships; and it has this advantage over every kind of wood employed in Europe for that purpose, that it is much less corruptible in water. Accordingly we find that vessels built of this wood last much longer than any others. But although this timber abounds more, and is cheaper here than in other places, yet it is not of the best quality; for from the moisture and richness of the soil, it grows up faster, and consequently acquires less solidity than in parts which are dry, bleak, and exposed to the force of the winds. And this is the reason why ships built at Bombay, when they are supplied with wood from the Balaghât mountains, are less subject to decay.—*See Hunter's Account of Pegu, quoted p. 3.*

badly

badly provided for sea. Her crew consisted of 53 men, chiefly Lascars, or native seamen, with a few Europeans; and we had also on board, the Captain's wife, her maid (a young woman of the country) and some Malays to assist in working the ship, in all 72 souls.

We sailed the 29th of May, 1795, and beating out with the young ebb, in five to seven fathoms water, with soft mud, about 6 P. M. shoaled suddenly to a quarter less four fathoms. The ship was immediately ordered about, but the helm was scarcely a-lee when she struck on a hard sand bank. All was hove a-back in order to get her off, but without effect; both the bower anchors were let go to prevent her driving farther on, and they held her some time, till, one of the cables parting, she dragged the other anchor; whereupon we let go the sheet-anchor, which brought us up. It was the last quarter ebb, and we had no doubt of getting her off on the flood, provided we could keep her from upsetting at low water. We therefore struck top-gallant-yards and masts, to relieve her of as much top weight as possible. At low water she heeled so much as to alarm us, but floated off with the flood. We hove up our anchors, standing off under a press of sail into deep water; and as she made no water, we hoped she had not received any material damage. On the 1st of June
a gale

a gale commenced at S. S. W. with a very high sea ; the ship laboured much, and very soon sprung a leak. During six days the gale lasted, it required the utmost exertion of all hands, without distinction, to keep her free, the pump-gear getting frequently out of order by constant hard working. We unfortunately had no carpenter on board, and scarcely any carpenter's tools, but we made shift, with the few we had, to repair the pumps as often as it became necessary. We were frequently foiled by the sand ballast choking them, which obliged us to hoist out and clear them, after having, to no purpose, tried many expedients to prevent their sucking up the sand. We held several consultations about returning to Rangoon, but the many dangers attending the making that coast, (a lee-shore so low as not to be seen above eight or ten miles off, and at that distance only seven fathoms water) made us unanimous in opinion, that as long as any hope could be entertained of saving the vessel, we should endeavour to keep her clear of the coast of Pegu.

On the sixth, the gale abated, the ship made less water, and required but one pump constantly going. We discovered a leak between wind and water along the stern-post, and the first calm day got out the jolly-boat, and nailed some tarred canvas and oakum on it, with sheet lead over all.

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This expedient so far succeeded, that while good weather continued, she required pumping but once every watch, which led us to imagine we had effectually stopped the leak; we therefore congratulated each other on our supposed deliverance, and proceeded cheerfully on the voyage. But our congratulations were premature. Happy had it been for us, if we had embraced the opportunity of returning to Rangoon, to have the leak properly secured, and the ship prepared for encountering the dangers which might reasonably be expected in the bay of Bengal, in the middle of the south-west monsoon. We must all have been infatuated when we imagined that a piece of canvas, though it might exclude the water in moderate weather, could sufficiently secure such a leak as ours, when the ship should come to labour.

The repairs of the pump-gear were hardly finished, when, on the 12th of June, a severe gale commenced at W. S. W. From the beginning of it, the ship made more water than she had done before, and we experienced the same distressing consequences, the choaking of the pumps and destruction of the pump-gear. We laboured incessantly with three pumps, and baling also with a bucket; such of us as could handle carpenter's tools working with them and pumping alternately. Towards the 16th, almost exhausted with fatigue and want

of rest, we began to entertain serious apprehensions for our safety; we therefore determined to set all the sail we could carry, and keep her away, so as to fetch the nearest part of the coast of Coromandel, proposing afterwards to coast it along to Madras, or bear up for Bengal, as our situation should permit. We accordingly set the close-reefed top-sails, and could not stand and bore up; but the pumps requiring such constant labour, it was not in our power to pay the necessary attention to the sails, so that before the 18th, they were all blown away from the yards, except the foresail, with which we lay to, till the 20th, at noon, being in latitude $17^{\circ} 10'$ N. and (by reckoning) about 9° W. of Cape Negrais. The ship now pitched so deep and heavy, that we sometimes despaired of her ever rising again, and our people were so much alarmed, that it was with difficulty we kept them to their stations. About noon we wore, hauled up the foresail, and kept before the wind under bare poles, uniting in a general effort at the pumps and buckets, in hopes to clear her; but in vain. The men who were below coming up at eight with the news that the water reached the lower deck, the Lascars gave themselves up to despair, nor did a ray of hope present itself even to us Europeans. An idea generally prevailing that the ship must go to the bottom, owing to the quantity of sand ballast under the timber, the people were clamorous for

for getting out the boats, which we knew could be of no service, as we had only an old jolly-boat, and a six-oared pinnace, both shattered and leaky. It was thought advisable to cut away the main-mast to lighten the ship, and, if possible, keep her from sinking till morning. About nine this was effected ; but unfortunately the wreck of the mast falling within board, in the confusion this occasioned, the men at the helm let the ship broach to, and the sea made a fair passage over all. At this critical moment, Mrs. Bremner, who had been in bed below, found means to get up the hatchway ; Mr. Wade, chief mate, and myself, helped her to the quarter-deck rail, and were making her fast in the mizen rigging, when the ship came to her utmost bearings, and instantly settled down. From the suddenness of the jerk, we thought she was going to the bottom, but she went no farther than just bringing the upper deck under water. All hands scrambled up the rigging to escape instant destruction, moving gradually upward as each succeeding wave buried them still deeper. Captain Bremner, his wife, Mr. Wade, and myself, with a few others, then got into the mizen top ; all the rest clung about the mizen rigging, except one man, who, happening to be forward at the time, gained the fore-top. Mrs. Bremner complained much of cold, having no covering but a shift and straw-petticoat, and as I happened to be better clothed than her husband,

band, I pulled off my jacket, and gave it to her. Finding, contrary to our first apprehensions, that the ship was not likely to go to the bottom, * we cut away with our knives the yards, &c. about the mizen mast, lest the additional weight of so many persons should carry away the mast. Though the ship rolled so violently, that it was with difficulty we could hold ourselves fast, through excessive fatigue some went to sleep before day ; but, for my part, I could not sufficiently compose myself. At first there did not appear to me the smallest ground for hope, yet, after two or three hours reflection, as a sinking man grasps at a straw, it occurred to me that, at the return of day light we should see land, or that some vessel might heave in sight and pick us up. I felt perfectly resigned to my fate while it seemed inevitable, but from the moment I indulged a hope of being saved, I could not endure the idea of an untimely death, and listened during the remainder of the night in anxious expectation of hearing a gun, several times imagining I actually heard one; and whenever I mentioned this to my companions, each fancied he heard the same report. At dawn of day one of the men called out " a sail ;" this was answered by the Muffulmans with an ejaculation

* The cargo being Teak wood, which is specifically lighter than water, it was physically impossible that the vessel should sink; and the sand ballast below preserved her upright position.

culation to their Prophet, which reminding us of what we owed to our God, we endeavoured to offer up our humble thanks for the deliverance which we now thought certain; but the man's sight deceived him as cruelly as my hearing had deceived me through the night. Perhaps during the whole course of our subsequent trials, we did not experience more exquisite pain than this disappointment gave us. My heart died within me, I regretted having indulged hopes which proved thus altogether delusive, and my spirits were so disquieted I could not regain that tranquillity of mind which at first supported me.

The prospect presented to our view, on the return of day, was awful beyond description—a tremendous gale of wind, the sea running mountains high, and the ship driving, we knew not whither; the upper deck and upper parts of the hull going to pieces, and the rigging that supported the mast, to which 72 unfortunate wretches clung, giving way, every moment threatened to close the scene. The shrieks of the women and Lascars added to the general horror. Some voluntarily yielded to their fate at once, while others, unable to keep their hold, were washed out of the rigging; but the greater part were reserved for trials yet more dreadful. The gale continued unabated for three days, the return of each day aggravating the misery

fery of our situation. We saw that we might remain on the wreck till carried off by famine, the most frightful shape in which death could appear to us. I confess it was my intention, as well as that of the rest, to prolong my existence by the only means that seemed likely to occur, eating the flesh of any whose life might terminate before my own. But this idea we did not communicate, or even hint to each other, till long afterwards, except once that the Gunner (a Roman Catholic) asked me, if I thought there would be a sin in having recourse to such an expedient. From want of room in the mizen, some of the men quitted it, intending to swim forward to the fore-top; and three or four lost their lives in the attempt. My agitation was, after some time, succeeded by a sort of callous, or rather sullen indifference. I tried to doze away the hours, and wished above all for a state of insensibility. The useless lamentations of my fellow sufferers provoked me, and instead of sympathizing, I was angry at being disturbed by them. During the first three days I did not suffer much from hunger or thirst, the weather being cool and cloudy; but on the fourth the wind abated, the clouds dispersed, and left us exposed to the scorching heat of a vertical sun, which soon roused me to the keenest sense of my situation. Hitherto the apprehension of what might be to come proved more intolerable than any thing I actually experienced.

experienced. Though my sensations, particularly of thirst, were exquisitely painful, they were not so violent as what I had read of in similar cases. But I now began to feel in reality what I had already tortured myself with in imagination, and I dreaded I was approaching to the point I had figured to myself, which the cries of those among us, most given to complaining, led me to think they had actually reached. I recollected however having read in Captain Inglefield's Narrative, that his boat's crew had received great benefit from lying down by turns in a blanket, which had been previously dipped in the sea, the pores of the skin absorbing the water, and leaving the salt on the surface. This practice I adopted as far as I could, by dipping a flannel waistcoat I wore next my skin from time to time in the sea. Many of my companions who followed my example, agreed that it refreshed them, and I am convinced that, by the blessing of God, it was the means of saving my life. It was further useful by occupying the mind, and preventing despondency; I always found a secret satisfaction in every exertion for the preservation of my life.

The night of the fourth day I had a most refreshing sleep, in which my mind dwelt on former scenes, particularly on yourself, and all those nearest to my heart. I dreamed that I was in a raging fever,

fever, and that you were praying by my bed side, dressed in lawn, and with a mitre like a bishop ; that while you continued praying the fever went off, but whenever you ceased it returned. I then thought you administered the sacrament to me, and just as I was about to put the cup to my lips I awoke. This dream made a deep impression on my mind, and the inference I drew from it was, that you had departed this life, and were in heaven a witness of my sufferings. Some of the circumstances brought to my recollection the misery of my uncle's family while his son was a missing, and the idea of what you must all suffer on my account greatly distressed me. But I called to mind the good lessons I had learned from you in earlier days, and found they had a wonderful effect in calming my spirits, and inspiring fortitude ; I humbly endeavoured to make my peace with God, and was reconciled to die.

On the 25th, (the fifth day from the ship's going down*) the first two persons died of want, which greatly affected the survivors. The one went off suddenly ; the other languished some hours in great agony, having first been seized with violent retchings,

* By the note, bottom of page 7, the reader will perceive, that by *going down* is only meant, that the ship's hull went under water, for it was not possible she should go to the bottom.

ings, which brought on strong convulsions ; and I afterwards remarked these symptoms were sure presages of an approaching painful death. This day was very hot, and the sea smooth. The Captain and Chief Mate having always expressed great confidence in rafts, some hands were employed in constructing one from the fore yard, sprit sail yard, and some other small spars which were still towed to the wreck.—It being finished next day about noon, the people began to get upon it, and the Captain, observing the general movement, hurried down from the mizen top, with Mrs. Bremner, and Mr. Wade. Though I did not approve of the plan, yielding to the impulse of the moment, I followed their example ; but the raft being insufficient to support us all, a contest arose, the strongest forced off the weakest, and obliged them to return to the wreck.—Just as they were about to cut the rope which made them fast, I asked Captain Bremner in what direction he supposed the land lay, and what probability he thought there was of making it?—Receiving no answer, I endeavoured to persuade him to return to the wreck, but finding I could make no impression on him, nor on any of the rest, was content to remain with them, and we paddled away before the wind with pieces of plank, which the people had previously shaped with their knives into the form of paddles. We had not gone far when we found our number still too great for the

the raft ; I seized the opportunity of renewing my remonstrances, which had the desired effect on Mr. Wade, who agreed to return with me to the mast head ; and the rest of the party, willing to lighten the raft, readily assisted us in regaining our former station. They again departed, and were out of sight by sun-set.—I must confess it sometimes occurred to me how easy it was to put an end to my sufferings, and while the raft was constructing I felt an inclination to get upon it, from an idea that it would be impossible to live 24 hours in that situation.—But it pleased God to fortify my mind against such desponding thoughts, and to endow me with a degree of patience and resignation I once thought impossible for any man to possess, under such protracted suffering. I resolved therefore, to remain on the wreck, and there to await the will of Providence.

The morning of the 27th, we were surprized to see the raft along side of us, on the opposite quarter to that from which it had set out. The people upon it having paddled all night, till their strength was exhausted, without knowing in what direction, they drifted at random, and at day-light finding themselves close to us, quitted the raft, and joined us at the mast heads. Captain Bremner soon after became delirious, which so alarmed his wife as to throw her into convulsions. He was a
strong

strong hearty man, rather past middle age ; she a delicate young woman, and they had not been married above eleven months. In the first stages of our distress the sight of his wife seemed to give the Captain pain, as if it reproached him with having brought her into her present danger ; but he now scarcely permitted her to quit his arms, and sometimes obliged us to use force to rescue her from the violence of his embraces. In his phrenzy, he thought he saw a table covered with all sorts of choice meats, and wildly demanded why we did not give him of this, or that dish ? His ravings generally turned on eating or drinking, often on his wife, and sometimes on other subjects.

Fearing the bad consequences of drinking salt-water, I refrained from it as long as possible, till unable to endure the parching heat of my stomach and bowels, and thinking my dissolution at hand, I went down to indulge myself with a last draught, and drank perhaps near two quarts. To my great astonishment, instead of injuring, it revived, both my strength and spirits, but still considering it as certain poison, I every moment expected my last agonies to begin. In this too I was mistaken : I got a sound sleep, and my inward heat abated ; I felt stronger, and though it purged and griped me violently, the inconvenience was trivial when

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compared with the benefit that always resulted from it.

The morning of the 28th, Mr. Wade declared he could bear his situation no longer, and would go once more on the raft, if I would accompany him. I rejected his proposal, and tried to dissuade him from it, but without effect.—Any death, said he, was preferable to his present existence, and nothing could change his resolution. He prevailed on two Italian Secundies, (helmsmen) two Malays, and three or four Lascars to join him, and in a few hours we lost sight of them. In the evening there came on a squall, which in all probability proved fatal to them, though to us it brought the most seasonable relief, as it was accompanied with heavy rain : we had no means of catching it, but by spreading out our cloaths, most of which had been so drenched by the salt water, that at first they tainted the fresh, but the rain was so heavy that it soon washed out the salt ; and we afterwards reserved one part of our clothes for catching the fresh water, and another for dipping in the sea, as occasion might require. After this we were seldom forty-eight hours without a shower, and in the intervals, when we had not strength left to go down ourselves, it was our constant practice to lower a jacket, or piece of cloth, into the sea by means of a rope yarn, and
 apply

apply it thus moistened to our bodies. Whenever a heavy shower afforded us a few mouthfuls of fresh water, (either by catching the drops as they fell, or squeezing them out of our clothes) it infused new life and vigour into us, and for a while we almost forgot our misery.—Another expedient we had frequent recourse to, finding it supplied our mouths with temporary moisture, was chewing any substance we could find, generally a bit of canvas, or even lead, when we could get any. This last will appear wonderful, as I have been since told it is considered as poison when taken into the stomach; but I assert the fact, having myself chewed it for hours together, 'till reduced almost to a powder, and sometimes swallowed it.—You will be surprised I do not mention leather; but none of us wore shoes at the time the ship went down; the Lascars never use any, and we always put off ours when it rained, as leather dressed in India is rendered useless by being wetted. Some who tried bits of leather that were about the rigging, found the taste and smell too offensive to be endured.

After all I suffered, I believe it fell short of the idea which I had formed of what probably would be the natural consequence of the situation to which we were reduced. I had read or heard that no person could live without food beyond a few days,

and when several had elapsed, I was astonished at my having existed so long, and concluded every succeeding day must be the last. I expected, as the agonies of death approached, we should be tearing the flesh from each other's bones. This apprehension filled me with horror, and perhaps the dread of the future helped to reconcile me to the present. Many of my companions expired delirious; the fear of a similar fate excited in me the most dreadful apprehensions, and it was my fervent prayer to the Almighty that he would be pleased to spare my reason in my last moments. I often wished it might be his will to release me from my sufferings, but whenever the moment (as I supposed) drew near, nature shrunk from dissolution; I dreaded surviving my companions, and thus being the last victim, yet I did not wish to be the next.

One of the Lascars, whose body broke out in ulcers of a very disgusting appearance, died in the catharpings just under the mizen top. His next neighbour tried to throw the body into the sea, but it had got so jammed in among the ropes, that he could not disengage it, and it remained there a day or two longer, until the stench became intolerable. Many such occurrences I could relate, but must pass them over in silence, as the bare recollection

lection of them, even at this distance of time, is too powerful for my feelings.

On the morning of the eleventh day (July 1) Mrs. Bremner found her husband dead in her arms, and our strength was now so reduced, that with the utmost difficulty we were able to throw his body overboard, after stripping off part of his clothes for the use of his wife. In the course of this day two others died in the mizen, and two more in the fore-top, with which we had of late little or no communication, being no longer able to come down the rigging, or speak loud enough to be heard at that distance. After the gale abated, several of the Lascars went forward, and our number was now so diminished, that the two tops held us all.

I can give very little account of the rest of the time, the sensation of hunger being now lost in that of weakness; when I could get a supply of fresh water, I was comparatively easy. Hitherto we had occasionally found the nights chilly, and as our strength decreased, so did our ability to endure the cold. The heavy rains by which we were drenched (though beneficial in other respects) rendered it more severe, in so much, that after sunset our limbs were quite benumbed, our teeth chattered, and we sometimes feared we should die

of extreme cold. As the heat increased, it diffused its influence throughout our whole frame ; we exposed first one side, then the other, until our limbs became pliant, and as our spirits revived we indulged ourselves in conversation, which sometimes even became cheerful, and I once caught myself whistling a favourite air. But as the meridian heat approached, the scorching rays renewed our torments, and we wondered how we could have wished the rain to cease.

Of those who were not immediately near me I knew little, unless by their cries. Some struggled hard, and died in great agony ; but it was not always those whose strength was most impaired that died the easiest, though in some cases it might have been so. I particularly remember the following instances : Mr. Wade's servant, a stout and healthy boy, died early, and almost without a groan ; while another of the same age, but of a less promising appearance, held out much longer. The fate of these unfortunate boys differed also in another respect, highly deserving of notice. Their fathers were both in the fore-top when the lads were taken ill. The father of Mr. Wade's, hearing of his son's illness, answered with indifference, " that he could do nothing for him," and left him to his fate. The other, when the accounts reached him,
hurried

hurried down, and watching for a favourable moment, crawled on all-fours along the weather gunwale to his son, who was in the mizen rigging. By that time, only three or four planks of the quarter-deck remained, just over the weather-quarter gallery ; and to this spot the unhappy man led his son, making him fast to the rail to prevent his being washed away. Whenever the boy was seized with a fit of retching, the father lifted him up, and wiped away the foam from his lips : and if a shower came, he made him open his mouth to receive the drops, or gently squeezed them into it from a rag. In this affecting situation, both remained four or five days, till the boy expired. The unfortunate parent, as if unwilling to believe the fact, then raised the body, gazed wistfully at it, and when he could no longer entertain any doubt, watched it in silence till it was carried off by the sea ; then wrapping himself in a piece of canvass, sunk down, and rose no more, though he must have lived two days longer, as we judged from the quivering of his limbs when a wave broke over him.

This scene made an impression even on us, whose feelings were in a manner dead to the world, and almost to ourselves, and to whom the sight of misery was now become habitual.

On the evening of the 10th of July (as we afterwards calculated, being the twentieth day since the ship went down *) one of the people said he saw something like land in the horizon to the Eastward. His assertion was heard without emotion, no one immediately making any effort to ascertain the truth. But though it produced no visible effect, it seemed to operate inwardly, for a few minutes afterwards, raising my head to observe the appearance which the other had remarked, I found every eye turned towards it. We all continued looking the same way, though not very earnestly, till the dark shades of evening by degrees interrupted our view; and every one then making his own observations, all agreed it was land. Mrs. Bremner, and others, asked my opinion, and whether I thought there was yet a possibility of escape. I answered it did not appear to me to be land, but if it were, there was one comfort, that it would most likely soon put an end to our sufferings, as the ship would certainly ground a long way off shore, and be beat to pieces in a few hours. This had been always my opinion, so that I dreaded seeing land; but at this time I was indifferent to every thing, and incapable of any acute sensation. I remember, that on awaking at day-break next morn-

* The Reader will see afterward on what principle the calculation is founded.

ing, I did not think of looking whether there was land in sight or not, till one of the people in the fore-top waved a handkerchief, by way of signal, that it was so. I then felt an inclination to get up and look, but happening to be in an easy position, with my arms folded so as to press my stomach, from which I found great relief, I was too indifferent to turn myself round. My neighbours were more affected; some one got up and declared it was land, which roused another, and by degrees all of us. It appeared to me very like land, but still I was neither sure of it, nor much interested about it. Mrs. Bremner having asked me if I thought it was the coast of Coromandel, this seemed to me such a ridiculous question, the monsoon blowing directly from that quarter, that I answered, if it were, she and I should go to the long-room at Madras, and there be exhibited as curiosities under the pictures of Cornwallis and Meadows, at so much a head. However, in the course of the day, the land was so plain, which we afterwards found to be the coast of Aracan*, that there could no longer be any doubt; and anxiety then became general. I entertained some hopes of being saved, though this was abated by the apprehension of the ship's grounding far from shore, and could

* That part of the east coast of the Bay of Bengal which lies to the northward of Ava is called Aracan, or Recan.

not help thinking, after having survived such extraordinary sufferings on the middle of the Ocean, it would be a cruel aggravation of the severity of our fate to perish thus in sight of land. In the evening we were so near, as to perceive, with inexpressible anguish, it was a wild jungle*, without any appearance of inhabitants. I dreaded that the ship would strike every moment, and lay down, persuaded I should never see another day. I slept notwithstanding, and was awakened before daylight, by the ship striking on a rock so violently as to shake the mast at every thump. I had foreseen this event, and prepared once more to meet my fate. At day-break the motion was so violent, that we could not hold ourselves fast. The tide having fallen several feet, the remaining beams of the upper deck were out of the water; we therefore made an effort to get down on them, which we accomplished with some difficulty. The Gunner and I endeavoured to assist Mrs. Bremner, and brought her to the cat-harpings; but she was too weak to help herself, and we had not strength to carry her, so were obliged to leave her there, and with great difficulty got upon the beams. The tide by this time had left the ship so far, that she

* Uncultivated ground, covered with thickets, or shrubs, dwarf trees, creeping plants, &c. in some parts rendered impenetrable by the bamboo, and generally infested by tigers, or other wild animals.

no longer moved, and the gun-deck was almost dry. The Lascars came out of the fore-top, and were searching among the rubbish for money. I proposed to two of them, who seemed stronger than the rest, to bring Mrs. Bremner down from the cat-harpings, but this they refused to do, unless she gave them part of the money which they understood she had about her. When the ship went down, she had fortunately put about 30 rupees in her pocket, and her anxiety to preserve them was often the subject of raillery among us, who little suspected how much these few rupees were to be instrumental in saving our lives, as will by and by appear. They agreed at last to bring her down to the gun-deck for eight rupees, and the service was no sooner performed, than they insisted on being paid on the spot: this was the only instance they shewed of want of subordination or fellow-feeling for their companions in distress, their conduct having been (except in this instance) highly exemplary, and particularly in the delicacy they uniformly shewed towards our unhappy females.

After resting ourselves sometime on the gun-deck, we observed the rudder-head had been knocked off, and that through the hole in which the head had been, there was a passage to the gun-room. As soon as the tide had left the orlop deck, we got into the gun-room to see if any thing remained

remained that could be of use to us, but the sea had washed away every article, except three or four cocoa nuts, which, after a good deal of search, we found jammed under the timber. You will naturally suppose that these were kept by the persons who had the good fortune to discover them, but it was not so; the very first that was found was shared among many, the finder only claiming the water of the nut as his exclusive property. In this he was disappointed; the liquor was turned by age into a few drops of oil extremely unpalatable, and by no means calculated to allay thirst: The solid part too had no nourishment in it, and we found ourselves rather the worse for having eaten of it. That a person under such circumstances should not have first considered himself before he helped his neighbour, may seem to you improbable, as may also other circumstances here related; I will however state facts, without pretending to account for them. I am convinced that had the cocoa nuts been ever so good, they would have been equally divided in the same manner; for indeed the sensation of hunger now gave us little or no pain, and that of thirst still continued predominant. Water, fresh water, mixed with acid, was what perpetually haunted my own imagination, not a short draught which I could gulp down in a moment (of this I could not endure the thought), but a large bowl-full, that I could scarcely hold in
my

my arms; and when I thought of victuals, I longed most for such as I could swallow at once without the trouble of chewing.

Our situation in the gun-room was comparatively so much easier and more comfortable than it had been at the mast-heads, that we became in a manner content. I saw no prospect of being able to get ashore, and hardly wished to make the attempt, there being, in my opinion, no chance of safety there; and of the two deaths, it seemed better to expire quietly on the wreck than to be torn to pieces by the tygers. Besides, I was not altogether without hope, that by remaining on the wreck, we might in the end be saved, the same dependance, from which I had all along derived comfort, still supporting me, namely, that God Almighty would not have prolonged our lives in a manner so extraordinary, had he not decreed to send us relief at last; and this belief was strengthened by remarking, that none of us had died since we first saw the land.

In the afternoon we observed something like men walking along the shore, which raised our expectations greatly. All of us who were able got on the taffall rail, and endeavoured to attract their attention by waving cloths, and making all the noise in our power, but they took not the least
notice

notice, and passed on, which seemed so unaccountable to us, that we began to doubt whether they were really men. The sight, however, roused some of us to make an effort to get on shore, and for that purpose we all went into the gun-room to get out some small spars which we had observed there. With infinite fatigue we launched six of them into the water, but these were not thought sufficient to support us all, and we were so exhausted, that we could move no more at that time. Towards evening, however, six of the stoutest Lascars got upon them, and it being the young flood, soon gained the beach, though there was a heavy surf. They found a stream of fresh water, of which having drank their fill, they lay down in despair under the shade of a bank on the beach. Next morning we observed them again walking towards the stream to drink; and it afforded us some consolation to know they were not destroyed by tygers, but we now thought ourselves too much reduced in number and strength to move a single spar. Two women, two old men, a middle aged man who had been confined in bed some days when the ship went down, two boys, and myself, composed the whole number now on the wreck; yet, strange to tell, these survived hardships to which the young and the robust had fallen an early sacrifice.

About

About noon we observed a large party of natives coming along the beach to the spot where the men lay, and now our attention was roused to observe in what manner they treated our companions. They immediately kindled a fire, which we rightly concluded was for dressing rice ; soon afterwards they came down to the water's edge, waving handkerchiefs as a signal for us to come ashore. It is utterly impossible to describe our emotions at this moment. Between hope and fear, we were in a state of distraction ; though we saw they had no boats, and that if they had, the surf would prevent their making use of them, still we entertained hopes they might devise some means of coming off to us. My life, which some time before was a burthen to me, now became infinitely precious ; and though I observed pieces of plank floating off from the ship, I was afraid to trust myself on one of them. I proposed to the Gunner and the Serang (the native boatswain) to assist me and my boy in trying to get out a spar ; they at first consented, but after some time gave up the attempt. With great difficulty myself and my boy got it tumbled into the water, and made it fast with a rope ; after which we laid hold of a short piece of plank that was floating past, and secured it in the same manner. We had now each a piece of wood with which to make an effort ; I hesitated some time, but was at last prevailed on by my boy, and we agreed to set off together.

gether. After he got upon his piece of plank, my resolution failed me ; however, when I considered the people might leave the beach that night, and that I should have less strength to-morrow, I felt myself called on to make the attempt ; I therefore took my leave of Mrs. Bremner, who, as I have already mentioned, was unable to make the least exertion for herself, and even so weak as not to admit of our making any for her with effect. With pain I was obliged to leave her, but I hoped if I reached the shore, I should prevail on some of the natives to come to her relief. She gave me a rupee at parting, and dismissed me with a thousand good wishes for my safety. Just as I was recommending myself to the Divine protection, the piece of wood got loose and floated away. I paused for a moment, and summoning up all my resolution, plunged into the sea. Though I could hardly move a joint before, whenever I got into the water my limbs became pliant, and I soon swam to the spar, but could not long keep hold of it. Had it been flat, it would have continued on one side, but being a perfect square, it turned round with every motion of the water, and rolled me under it. This exhausted me so much, as almost to put an end to my hopes ; I repeatedly let it go in despair ; but whenever I found myself sinking, I caught hold of it again, and grasped it with all my might. I observed that I did not get any nearer the shore, but

but drifted in a direction almost parallel to the beach. Foreseeing that I should not be able to hold out much longer, I tried every method to keep the spar from turning, and at last lay along side of it with one hand and one leg over, while with the other arm and leg I struggled hard to guide it towards the shore. For some time I succeeded tolerably well, but all at once was overwhelmed with a tremendous sea, which broke over me, and tore away the spar. I now thought all was over; and, after a short struggle, was beginning to sink, when another surf threw me right across the spar, which was carried back with considerable force by the reflux of the sea. I was almost breathless with the shock, yet I instinctively grasped the spar with both my arms and legs, and was several times rolled round and round along with it. I was also scratched with the sand and shells which the surf had carried back from the beach, but this I considered as a sign that I was near the shore, (though I could not see it) which greatly animated my hopes. One or two more surfs threw me violently on the rocks, and, to prevent the returning surf from carrying me back, I laid fast hold of them.

The only clothes I had when I left the ship, were a flannel waistcoat, part of a shirt, and a pair of trowsers. The two first, being ragged, I tied in a

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bundle

bundle at my back to prevent their encumbering me, but I lost them in the surf. The trowsers I had still on, finding them entangled in the rocks, when the surf had retreated, I tore them off, and made shift to crawl on all fours (for I could not straighten my back) beyond the reach of the surf. Being now perfectly naked, I found the wind extremely cold, and therefore laid myself down under the lee of a rock, where, in a few minutes, though I observed some of the natives coming towards me, I fell asleep.—Three or four of them soon wakened me, speaking in the Moors language, at which I was overjoyed, for I feared we were beyond the Company's territories, and in those of the King of Ava.—They told me we were only six days journey from Chittagong, that they were Company's ryots, (or peasants) and should take care of me if I would accompany them.—I answered, as well as I could, that I was so exhausted with fatigue, and the bruises which I had received, that I could not stir, but begged to have a few grains of raw rice. Wretched as my condition was, I felt distressed at being seen without clothes, which they no sooner observed, than one of them, a Burmah * (to whose humanity we were all afterwards much indebted) took his turban from his head, and tied it round my middle, after the custom of the country. Seeing

* The natives of the kingdom of Ava, or Burmah, as it is sometimes called, are denominated Burmahs.

me make ineffectual efforts to rise, two of them laid hold of my arms, and bore me along, my feet seldom touching the ground. Coming to a little stream, I begged to be allowed to drink, from which they endeavoured to dissuade me, but as I would take no denial, they let go my arms, and dropped me on my feet. I immediately fell on my face in the water, but, instead of endeavouring to rise, I began to gulp it up as fast as I could, and should certainly have drunk to excess had I been permitted.—I felt greatly revived by bathing in the fresh water, as well as by what I had taken into my stomach, and walked the rest of the way, leaning on the arms of my conductors. We soon arrived where their fire was kindled, and there I found the six Lascars, my boy, the Gunner, and the Serang. The Lascars had gained the shore, as already mentioned, the preceding day, and the Gunner and Serang, though they had left the ship later, as well as my boy, who had set off about the same time with me, being all more expert swimmers, had reached the shore before me.

My joy at finding my companions safe, and at the accounts they gave of the humanity of our deliverers quite overcame me, and for a while I believe my mind was deranged. I could not comprehend how the Gunner and Serang had got on shore, as I had left them on board, and their ex-

planations served only to bewilder me the more. I waited patiently about ten minutes till the rice was boiled, and did not ask for any raw; nor, when a little of the boiled was brought me on a leaf, would I touch it till they assured me it was not too much. I then put some into my mouth with my fingers, but, after chewing a little, I found I could not swallow it. One of the natives, observing my distress, dashed some water in my face with his hand, which, washing the rice down my throat, at first almost choked me, but it caused such an exertion of the muscles, that I soon recovered the power of swallowing, though for some time I was obliged to take a mouthful of water with every one of rice. My lips, and the inside of my mouth were so cracked with the heat, that every motion of my jaws set them a bleeding, and gave me great pain.

I never could exactly recollect what passed from this time till I awoke in the evening, after a most refreshing sleep.—I then represented to the natives the situation in which I left Mrs. Bremner, and her fellow-sufferers, and well knowing the influence of money on such minds, hinted that, if they would save her life, she was able liberally to reward them. Some of them promised to watch during the night, as the tide might then be higher than in the day-time,

time, and would probably bring the wreck nearer to the shore.

After my nap I found myself very hungry, and was importunate with my deliverers for more rice, but they said they could have no more dressed that night. I therefore went to sleep again, and at midnight was awakened with the news that the lady and her maid were safe on shore. I rose immediately to welcome my fellow-sufferers, whom I found by the fire, they having by this time eaten some rice; and I think I never saw joy more strongly painted than it was at that instant on the emaciated countenance of Mrs. Bremner.

I afterwards understood that it was to the Burmah's humanity she owed her safety. Finding that she had some rupees about her, the natives had already begun to form plans for dividing the spoil, which this worthy man overhearing, he watched his opportunity, and with the assistance of one of his followers, saved the women without stipulating for any reward.

During the night the ship parted in two; the bottom stuck fast on the rocks, and the upper part floated in so near, that the two men who still remained on the wreck were able to wade to the beach.—We lay all night on the ground without

any covering, and, as it rained hard, suffered much from the cold. In the morning we were supplied with rice as before by the natives, but they now began to enquire for the money which they understood Mrs. Bremner had about her, and refused to give any more rice without being paid for it. The Lascars (eight in number) bargained for themselves out of the money which they had received for bringing Mrs. Bremner down from the cat-harpings, and, being all Mussulmen, they lived separately from us, their religion forbidding them to eat with persons of any other caste. Mrs. Bremner agreed to pay eight rupees for supplying the rest of our party with rice for four days, till we should gain strength enough to proceed to the nearest village, which was represented to be thirty miles to the northward.

At low water the natives went off to rummage the wreck, but they found every thing had been washed away, except a few broken musquets, some iron, brass, and lead, and the loose copper about the ship's bottom, all of which they carried away. I endeavoured to persuade them to desist, by representing that they might be called to account for the plunder they were taking, but they maintained they had a right to it for saving our lives. They owed me a grudge ever afterwards, and I soon had reason to repent of my zeal for the owners. I know
not

not whether it was on this account, or because I was the only European, but they generally served me last, and gave me a less allowance than the rest: on those occasions my friend the Burmah interposed his good offices, and made a collection for me among his followers. Indeed they were sparing of rice to us all, and it was fortunate for us they were so, otherwise we should certainly have eaten to excess. It was not, however, this consideration that dictated their parsimony, for though they saved our lives at first, they now treated us with great inhumanity, except the Burmah and his followers, who were a check on the proceedings of the rest of the party, and incurred their resentment on that account.

The country abounding with wild deer, they contrived to kill some, and eat the venison, with the greatest composure, before our eyes, without giving us a morsel. We however picked up the bones, after they had thrown them away, and boiled them into a soup, which we found a very palatable, and, I doubt not, a wholesome addition to our rice.

All the time we remained here, the natives were busily employed at low water in ruminating the wreck, tearing the copper from the ship's bottom, and all the iron work they could manage.

The night before we were to set out towards the village, Mrs. Bremner not being able to walk, it was proposed that they should make a litter of bamboos for her; and, after much altercation, they agreed for twelve rupees to carry her and her maid, and for two more to supply us, her four pensioners, with rice, till our arrival at the village. I was much afraid I should not have strength to walk, and that they would not stop for me by the way. I therefore entreated to be indulged with a litter in like manner, assuring them that whenever I arrived at the nearest Company's settlement, (which I understood to be Ramoo) the English Gentlemen there would liberally reward them. They were deaf to my entreaties, and positively refused to carry me at all, as they said I was so much heavier, unless I paid twice as much as Mrs. Bremner, and that in ready money. I at length resolved to stay behind with some of the party, who were to be left in charge of the plunder taken from the wreck, till Mrs. Bremner should reach Ramoo, and represent my situation to my countrymen there, who, I was confident, would send a conveyance for me. I therefore endeavoured to bargain for rice during that interval, and they at first agreed to supply me at the rate of two rupees a day, but in the morning they repented, and would not give an ounce without ready money. In vain I promised a large sum hereafter; nothing would satisfy them

them but ready money, which they well knew I had not to give.

Finding entreaties and promises equally ineffectual, I had recourse to threats, and declared, that if I should fall a sacrifice to their ill usage, the East India Company, whose subject and servant I was, would assuredly avenge my death. They despised my threats, and beheld my distress with indifference; I had therefore no alternative, but to resolve on accompanying them, though I had great reason to fear I should give up by the way, and be torn to pieces by the tygers, which were said to infest the jungle.

When we were ready to set out, we found that only five men were to proceed along with us, four to carry the women, and one our provisions; and they engaged to give us rice only twice a day. We represented that we should never be able to perform the journey without a third meal, but one man, they said, could not carry more than would supply so many persons with two allowances each day, and they refused to let us have another man, without receiving three rupees more, a condition with which it was not in our power to comply.

On the 17th, at eight in the morning, we began our journey—Mrs. Bremner and her maid on litters;

tars ; myself, two boys, and the Gunner, on foot. The rest of our companions, being all Moor-men, had from the first attached themselves to the natives, and now remained behind with them. We were each furnished with a bamboo for a walking staff, and the wind being with us, and blowing fresh, greatly assisted our progress. At the end of the first mile we found ourselves much stronger than at the beginning, which gave us spirits to redouble our exertions ; but before we performed the second, though we rested often, we were much fatigued. Here we stopped an hour ; I fell asleep, and when awakened to prosecute my journey, I found my joints so stiff, that I could not get up without assistance. They walked so hard, that I could not keep up with them ; I was therefore obliged to rest myself oftener, and in consequence dropped behind : but our guide, who had more humanity, prevailed on them to wait till I came up.

My boy, though he could walk much faster, and though at the same time under dreadful apprehension of tygers, would not leave me, and we both fell considerably behind. At noon our companions stopped to dress some rice, and, as they had almost finished their repast ere we overtook them, they hurried us away before we had sufficiently refreshed ourselves. My joints now be-
came

came so stiff, that I could not move without extreme pain ; I rested every hundred yards, while my companions kept a steady pace, and seemed little inclined to wait for me.

In this censure, however, I do not mean to include Mrs. Bremner. She was entirely passive, and incapable of exercising any powers whatever of body or of mind. My boy still continued to shew a degree of attachment rarely to be met with in this class, but I would not suffer him to stay behind, and insisted on his joining the rest of the party. I thought it peculiarly hard that, after surviving such unexampled distress, I should now be in danger of perishing through the inhumanity of my fellow-creatures ; and this idea operated so strongly on my mind, that I was often tempted to give up the struggle, lie down and die. But reflection on the past goodness of Providence came to my relief, and suggested that it was my duty to persevere.

At length, after wholly losing sight of all my companions, I espied a party of Muggs * near the beach dressing rice. Not understanding their language, I was at a loss how to make known my di-

* A caste or tribe employed as porters, and easily distinguished by their appearance.

stress,

strefs, but went towards them in hopes that my wretched appearance would move their compassion, and I was not mistaken. Their Chief accosted me in Portuguese, and asked what had reduced me to my present condition. I replied in a few words that I was shipwrecked, famished, and deserted by my companions, and entreated him to give me something to eat.—He was much affected at the relation of my sufferings, and execrated the inhuman wretches who had left me, and whom he had seen pass half an hour before without speaking to them. He immediately gave me of the best victuals he had, and, observing that I ate in a ravenous manner, cautioned me to restrain my appetite at first, assuring me at the same time that he would give me a plentiful supply for my journey. He added that I ought not to despair, because I had been deserted by my companions, for that he would put me in a condition to reach Ramoo without their assistance, and therefore advised me to give up all thoughts of overtaking them, but to go on at my ease. The tygers, he said, in that part of the country were extremely shy, the smell of fire frightened them, and before we parted, he should teach me to strike a fire, so that at night I should have nothing to fear from them, and might therefore lie down in perfect security.

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The wounds which I had received in coming ashore being full of sand and dirt, this humane stranger washed them clean, and rubbed them with ghee, by which they were soon healed. He gave me as much rice as I could carry, and a pot to dress it in : also onions, chillies, and tobacco, the use of which he strongly recommended. In short he gave me part of every thing in his little store, and, in order to dress my food, and keep off the tygers at night, taught me how to strike fire, by rubbing two pieces of bamboo against each other in a particular manner. He concluded with informing me, that he was a Portuguese pedlar, a native of Chittagong, where he lived, and that he was now going to Aracan with goods.

I was so much affected with his kindness that I could hardly bid him adieu : after recommending me to the blessed Virgin, he hurried me away, that I might arrive before night at a hut two miles farther on. I had not gone many yards when he came running after me with a pair of trowsers, which he desired me to put on before I reached Ramoo, that my feelings might not be hurt by appearing there without clothes. At this fresh instance of his goodness I burst into tears ; I could not thank him : once more we took an affectionate leave of each other, and I pursued my journey in high spirits.

After

After walking about a mile, I sat down to rest myself, and tried to strike fire, but alas! I had not strength to make the requisite friction. It is impossible to describe my disappointment at this moment; it threw a damp over my spirits, but it convinced me how necessary it was to exert myself, and persevere till I should overtake my comrades.

Having some boiled rice in my pot, I eat a little, for I was hungry every half hour. I then proceeded once more, and soon reached the hut which my friend had described, when to my great joy I found the rest of the party eating rice; for the guide was better than his word, and gave them a third meal. To shew them that I was now independent, I took some rice out of my pot for myself, and gave some to my boy.

After we had all refreshed ourselves, we resumed our journey in the cool of the evening, and were presently overtaken by some of those who had been left behind at the wreck, together with six of the Lascars. They had met with my friend the Portugueze, who reproached them for their inhumanity to me, and told them I was a great man though now in distress, and that the Governor of Chittagong would call them to a severe account for their conduct. This intelligence produced a wonderful change in their behaviour. They now
affected

affected to treat me with some respect, but I declined their civilities, and accepted of an offer from the guide to carry my pot of rice. I could not however but be sensibly affected by this additional proof of my benefactor's kindness.

The night was far advanced before we arrived at some huts built for the convenience of travellers, where we intended to take up our residence; and here myself and boy dressed rice for ourselves, not chusing to come under any obligation to our fellow travellers. At day-break we were summoned to pursue our journey. My legs were much swelled, and my whole body so stiff that I could neither rise nor sit down without assistance, yet I proceeded with the rest as well as I could, and, when the sun got up, the warmth seemed to loosen my joints. About noon we came to a river, and, not being able to cross it till the tide should fall, we rested ourselves, and dressed some rice. At slack water we crossed on a raft of bamboos constructed by the natives, five or six swimming on each side.

The stiffness in our legs had now so much increased, that we could do little more than crawl, and were obliged to rest so often, that all the natives left us, except the guide, and four men who carried the women. Exhausted with fatigue, we were compelled to stop early in the evening, and
during

during the night it rained so hard that we were quite benumbed with cold. Worn out as we were, it was impossible to sleep; and long before daylight we proposed to the guide to set out, as we thought walking would keep us warm; but we had soon cause to repent, as it was so dark, that we stumbled on every little stone on the beach, and often fell to the ground. They told us we must not stop, as the tide was coming in, and would flow to a very steep and high ridge of rocks, which could not be passed at high water, and for once they thought proper to take us by the arm, helping us when we fell.

At noon we came into a cultivated country, within two miles of their village. The rain was so heavy, that it almost beat me down; I was once more left behind, and, missing my way, wandered a considerable time through the rice fields, till I met a native, who conducted me to the village, where I found my companions feasting sumptuously on rice and milk. We were given to understand that the Zemindar, or head man of the district, had sent for us to his house, about a mile off, that we might be properly taken care of. But I was so overcome with fatigue, that I resolved to take some sleep before I went any farther; I therefore begged of Mrs. Bremner to give my respects to the Zemindar, and request he would send the
litter

litter back for me. From some cause or other my request was not complied with, and in the evening I was compelled by hunger to make one effort more to walk towards the Zemindar's house, without a guide, and was stopped some time at a rivulet, before I could get any body to help me over. I went into the first hut which I found open, and was so completely spent, that I would have lain there all night, rather than walk round the Compound, or yard adjoining to the house. Some person who saw me enter this hut followed, and led me out of it into the house, where Doomo Ali Sheikdar received me with great cordiality, saying we were all welcome to remain with him for ten or twelve days, till we should be able to travel. He immediately ordered every necessary refreshment for me, and treated us all with apparent kindness; but I soon had reason to question the sincerity of his professions.

I learned that at Ramoo, which was distant about four miles, there was a detachment of the Company's troops, and was therefore impatient to get to this place; but whenever I proposed to Doomo Ali to send us thither, he urged us to remain some days longer where we were, and that he should send a thirty oared boat with us to Calcutta. It was plain he wished to keep us from Ramoo, and this circumstance alone was enough to make us

doubt the purity of his intentions. I suspected, not only that he connived at the past, but that he now began to form a more extensive scheme of future plunder, with a view to his own advantage. The cargo was yet untouched, as it consisted of teak-wood, and lying in the bottom of the vessel, adhered in a mass to the rocks on which she drifted. This was a prize too tempting for the Zemindar's virtue. Why he wished to keep us so long as ten or twelve days at his house, I could not guess; (perhaps a boat was not in readiness) but it required little sagacity to discover the cause of his unwillingness to forward us to Ramoo, as there was a Company's officer stationed at that place, to whom we might give information.

Meantime we were well treated, that is, we were plentifully supplied with victuals three times a day, and furnished with some clothes. This was enough for my companions, who were too much occupied with the contrast between the past and the present, to think of the future. My impatience, however, increased hourly, and after in vain trying every argument I could think of to prevail on the Zemindar to give us a boat to Ramoo, I secretly determined to attempt making my way thither by land.

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On the 21st, the Zemindar took me into a private room, and, after many professions of good will, told me, that though he had no concern in the plunder of the wreck, he was liable to be made responsible for it by the magistrate of the Islamabad district, who resided at Chittagong. He therefore proposed that I should give him a certificate under my hand, stating that he had not taken any share of the plunder, and that on this condition he would immediately furnish me with a boat to Ramoo, or any other place I desired. Thinking it fair to repel stratagem by stratagem, I affected readily to fall in with his proposal, but, instead of the certificate he required, I immediately drew up a very short sketch of our late history and present situation, which I looked on as little better than a sort of imprisonment. The Zemindar, I knew, could not read English; I therefore hoped that when he should come to produce the supposed certificate to any of the English Gentlemen, he would be caught in his own snare, and they be informed of our real circumstances. On second thoughts, however, fearing some of his people might be able to read the paper, I withdrew it, and wrote another in the terms prescribed, judging that any of the Company's servants, into whose hands this paper might fall, would send us assistance.

The Zemindar seemed much pleased with my compliance, and promised that a boat should immediately be provided; that day, however, and the next, passed without any measures being taken for this purpose. My certificate produced the desired effect, though not, as I afterwards learned, in the manner I expected. The Zemindar having proceeded with it to Ramoo, gave it to the Phougedar, (or officer of the police) who presented it by mistake for another paper to Lieutenant Towers, commanding a small detachment of the Company's troops stationed there. Mr. Towers, on reading the paper, expressed some surprize that he had not sooner been informed of the disastrous event to which it related, and, after making inquiry about the sufferers, was struck with the evasive answers of the Phougedar. This led to further inquiries; at last Mr. Towers, with great concern, discovered that the writer of the certificate, and his surviving companions, were then at the village, and, he feared, in distress. He therefore gave immediate orders for getting ready a boat to convey us to Ramoo; none being at hand, he walked down the bank of the river, and pressed the first he met. For our escort, he sent a Havildar (native serjeant) and two sepoy, bearing a letter, of which the following is a copy:—

Ramoo,

- *Ramoo, July 22, 1795.*

" I have this moment received a note signed W. Mackay, second officer of the ship Juno, certifying the loss of that ship. I am informed that the person who wrote the note, and several more, are in great distress. I send a Havildar and two sepoy, also a cook, who has rupees, and will administer every assistance for the relief of the sufferers, till they can be conveyed to me; when I will do all that is necessary for their comfort, and take immediate steps to get them conveyed speedily to Chittagong. The Havildar goes in a boat, and will procure another for the conveyance of the whole party to this place, should it be necessary.

(Signed) JOHN TOWERS,
Commanding at Ramoo.

The evening of the 22nd, (being the third since our arrival at the village) finding myself deceived by the promises of the Zemindar, I lost all patience, and resolved next morning to put in execution the plan which I have already mentioned, of proceeding alone, and by land, to Ramoo. I communicated my design to Mrs. Bremner, and the rest of my companions, (for we all messed together) and they agreed to spare me part of their supper allowance, which I laid up privately, to enable me to set out by break of day.

Soon after we had retired to rest, the whole house was alarmed by a thundering knock at the door*. It was the Havildar and his party, who, in an imperious tone, and authoritative manner, demanded admittance; and you can more easily conceive, than I can describe, my feelings on perusing Mr. Towers's kind note. No language can do them justice. Such was the eagerness of this Gentleman to relieve our wants, that he sent us all the bread, cold meat, &c. he had in the house, which we devoured with the greatest avidity, tho' we had supped not long before on rice and milk. The agitation of our spirits was so great, that we could not sleep, and, before day-light, we were ready to embark; but our Havildar would not suffer us to depart till he had ordered a sumptuous breakfast, for which he said (producing at the same time a bag of rupees) he was ordered to pay by his Commander. This, however, was unnecessary, as we had all been plentifully supplied with victuals.

After breakfast we embarked, and about noon arrived safely at Ramoo. Mr. Towers came down to the river's side to receive us, and his feeling heart seemed deeply affected with our ghastly appearance, though we looked rather to advantage

* It appears that they were not lodged at the Zemindar's, but at a house of inferior note.

in the clothes which he had the goodness to send us.

He immediately conducted us to his house, resigned his own bed-chamber to Mrs. Bremner, and provided for me and the rest as well as he could. He was himself our servant, our surgeon, and even our cook.—Nothing could exceed the tender solicitude which he shewed to relieve our wants, and administer to our comfort; it did honour to his feelings, and never, never shall the remembrance of it be effaced from my mind. Ramoo is an obscure little town or village, to which a company of sepoy is occasionally detached from the battalion at Chittagong. This station, shunned by most of the officers, from its uncomfortable situation, and the total want of society, was peculiarly agreeable to Mr. Towers. Possessing a talent for literature, he there enjoyed an uninterrupted opportunity of pursuing it, and particularly of acquiring the native languages, which he has done to an eminent degree. His anxiety to administer comfort to his unfortunate guests was on this occasion strikingly marked. Every thing in his power was done for our accommodation, and there was an indescribable something in his manner, which more than compensated for every deficiency. He wished us to remain with him until our strength should be perfectly recruited, but was apprehensive that, after

our recent sufferings, we might be attacked by fevers or other disorders, for which his medicines and skill might prove insufficient. I was also anxious to reach Chittagong as soon as possible, that proper measures might be taken for recovering the timber, and whatever else could be saved from the wreck. It was therefore agreed that we should proceed to Chittagong without delay.

On the 26th, we embarked on two boats which Mr. Towers had provided for us, and amply supplied with every article of comfort within his reach. He also sent a guard of sepoy's for our protection, and gave us a letter of introduction to Lieutenant Price, commanding officer of the battalion stationed there.

We arrived late in the evening of the 28th, and Mr. Price instantly sent his palanquin for Mrs. Bremner and me, and received us all with a degree of hospitality and kindness, which could only be equalled by that of Mr. Towers. Next morning he settled Mrs. Bremner at the house of a widow lady; he entertained me at his own, and disposed of the others in a suitable manner.

After resting myself a day, and being decently equipped with clothes, through the kindness of Mr. Price, I waited on George Thompson, Esq.
Judge

Judge and Magistrate of the Islamabad district, and communicated to him the substance of what has been here related. Mr. Thompson ordered a guard to proceed to the wreck, to prevent further depredations, and directed me to draw up a sketch of the principal facts and circumstances of the loss of the ship, to which myself and some more of the survivors should make affidavit, for the satisfaction of the owners, and all concerned. Accordingly I wrote such a narrative, and Mrs. Bremner, Thomas Johnson the gunner, and myself, being the only Christians saved, were solemnly sworn to the truth of it before Mr. Thompson, by whom our affidavit was entered in the public register. I forwarded an attested copy of this affidavit to the owners, at Madras, and assured them that as soon as I was able I should return, with proper assistance, to the wreck, to land the timber, and whatever might remain of the copper and iron work of the ship.

My friend the Portuguese pedlar, having informed me that his wife lived here, and having also directed me to a *Padré*, (or priest) from whom I should hear of her, I could not neglect this opportunity of testifying my gratitude to my benefactor by enquiring for his wife. I accordingly called on the *Padré*; and was truly concerned to learn that she had died a few days before. She left no family.

Judging

Judging it a duty I owed to my employers to do my utmost for their interest, I had early formed the design of returning to the wreck, to save as much as possible of their property without any view to my own advantage; and I was now informed that the law would entitle me to a certain salvage: for, having quitted the ship after doing my duty as long as any chance remained of saving her, I must now be considered in the light of an indifferent person.

Generous living at the hospitable table of Mr. Price, and other gentlemen of the settlement, had, before the expiration of a week, recruited my strength so much beyond expectation, that I had no reason to apprehend any ill consequences to my health from the undertaking. I therefore hired a boat, carpenters, Lascars, and Coolies, (or porters) to accompany me, and, after having received every necessary assistance from Messrs. Price and Thompson, I embarked on the evening of the 8th of August, and on the 12th arrived at Ramoo. Here I rested a day with my much esteemed friend, Mr. Towers, and, on the 14th, began my journey by land towards Juno's Bay, (for so I named it) but, though I travelled in a palanquin, it was the 17th before I reached the Bay.

Immediately

Immediately on my arrival, I got two temporary huts erected, an operation at which the people of that country are very expert, and which they perform in the following manner :—They erect two bamboos for standards at the extreme ends of the building, on which they lay a long pole for a ridge ; they then take small bamboos, giving them a cut in the middle, and bending them into an angle, and these they lay over the ridge pole. Above all they place branches of the ground rattan, which makes an excellent thatch. Little was done the first week, owing to the incessant rains, but after these had abated, I got on tolerably well, and by the 6th of October, I had all the timber landed and piled up. I then burnt the remains of the unfortunate Juno, to come at the iron-work, which, having carefully collected, I left the Gunner with a guard in charge of the whole, and took my departure for Chittagong.

During my stay at Juno's Bay, I again experienced the unremitting attentions of Mr. Towers, who regularly supplied myself and people with provisions, and every other necessary. He forwarded letters from my friends, and others from the owners, appointing Herbert Harris, Esq. of the honourable Company's civil service, and me, joint Attorneys for the disposal of their property.

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On my arrival at Chittagong, I corresponded with my colleague, Mr. Harris, on the subject, and was on the point of disposing of the timber to great advantage there, when I received a second letter from the owners, directing me to deliver up the whole property to Captain Galloway, of the Restoration, then lying in Juno's Bay for that purpose.

I accordingly hurried down once more to the Bay; by the 25th of November I shipped every thing on board the Restoration, and took my passage in her for Calcutta, where I arrived the 12th of December, 1795.

Having brought my Narrative thus far, a desire will naturally arise in your mind to know the fate of my companions in misfortune. Mrs. Bremner recovered her health and spirits, and is since well married. My faithful Boy, whom I would gladly have taken to sea with me again, expressed so much aversion to undertake another voyage, that I reluctantly left him at Chittagong, where he has no doubt embraced some other profession.

One of the two men left behind at Juno's Bay, died soon after, as I have since learnt from his companion, the person already mentioned as labouring under a severe illness at the commencement, and which continued without intermission during

during the whole course of our sufferings. Every relief which the nature of our situation permitted us to administer to his distress, was attentively applied, but in vain; the obstinate nature of his complaint resisted every remedy, and there being no hospital at Chittagong, I carried him with me on board the Restoration, and placed him in the hospital at Calcutta, where, I am sorry to say, I left him in much the same state as when he was at first delivered from the wreck. Of Mrs. Bremner's maid, and the rest of the party, I can communicate no certain information.

Before I conclude, it may be proper to observe, that of the facts above stated I have a clear, distinct, and particular recollection, up to the 1st of July; but the interval from that day to the 10th, when we first saw the land, is greatly perplexed and obscured, excepting as to the incidents of the two fathers and their two dying boys, of which the impression is too powerful to be effaced. How then, it may be asked, was it possible to ascertain the lapse of time during that dreadful interval? The fact is, on the ship's going down, having the prospect of remaining long in our dismal situation, many of us began to reckon the days and nights by cutting notches on the mast, or tying knots on a rope-yarn. As individuals dropped, this reckoning was interrupted, disturbed, and at length lost. But
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on getting ashore, memory was gradually restored, and an accurate measurement of time obtained. We knew exactly the number of days which we passed on the road from the wreck to Ramoo. These being subtracted from the date of our arrival at that place, ascertains that of our gaining the land, and the day when our disaster commenced was too memorable to be mistaken by any one of us.

I remain, my dear Father,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

WILLIAM MACKAY.



